

**V. REMARKS**

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as unpatentable over Fujii (JP Publication No. 11-155998). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended claim 1 now recites:

A gaming machine comprising:

a variable display device configured to variably display a plurality of symbol rows each having a symbol placement face formed in a curved surface on which a plurality of symbols are placed;

an image display device being provided in front of and opposed to the variable display device and configured to display the symbols through a flat symbol transmission face and to display an image concerning a game;

a symbol illumination device configured to illuminate the symbols; and

an image display assistance device being provided lateral to an area between the variable display device and the image display device to cover an area sandwiched between the symbol placement face and the symbol transmission face, and configured to assist image display of the image display device,

wherein the symbol illumination device comprises a rear illumination lamp configured to illuminate the symbols from behind the symbols, and

wherein the image display assistance device reflects light emitted from the rear illumination lamp.

Amended claim 2 now recites:

A gaming machine comprising:

a variable display device configured to variably display a plurality of symbol rows on which a plurality of symbols are placed;

an image display device being provided in front of the variable display device

and configured to display an image concerning a game;

a symbol illumination device configured to illuminate the symbols; and

an image display assistance device being provided lateral to an area between the variable display device and the image display device and configured to reflect light emitted from the symbol illumination device and to assist image display of the image display device,

wherein the symbol illumination device comprises a rear illumination lamp configured to illuminate the symbols from behind the symbols, and

wherein the image display assistance device reflects light emitted from the rear illumination lamp.

Amended claim 9 now recites:

A gaming machine comprising:

a variable display device configured to variably display a plurality of symbol rows on which a plurality of symbols are placed;

an image display device being provided in front of the variable display device and configured to display an image concerning a game;

a side illumination device being provided lateral to an area between the variable display device and the image display device and configured to illuminate the symbols from a side of the symbols;

a case that houses at least a part of the variable display device; and

a rear illumination lamp disposed behind the symbols and operative to illuminate the symbols from therebehind,

wherein the side illumination device includes a plate attached to the case and a lighting device provided on the plate.

Amended claim 10 now recites:

A gaming machine comprising:

a first display device configured to variably display a plurality of symbols;

a second display device including a display panel that is provided opposed to and spaced from the first display device, and the second display device configured to display the symbols through the display panel and to display an image concerning a game on the display panel; and

a display assistance device provided lateral to an area between the first display device and the display panel of the second display device and configured to assist image display of the second display device; and

a rear illumination lamp disposed behind the symbols and operative to illuminate the symbols from therebehind.

It is respectfully submitted that Fujii teaches away from the newly-added technical features of the claimed inventions because Fujii does not believe it is a good idea to illuminate the symbols from behind the symbols. See paragraphs [0005] and [0008] and Figure 16 of Fujii. For convenience of the Examiner, a machine-translated copy of the Detailed Description of the Invention of Fujii (pages 1/6 through 6/6) is provided herewith. More particularly, paragraph [0008] states:

[0008] When it irradiates with light from the inside of the reel 104, in order for Lighting Sub-Division to have utility and to take a symbol specify vividly like the example of drawing 16, excessive light volume is needed. Therefore, when a high-output thing is used for the light source 103 or a light source 103 is made to approach the reel 104, there is a fear of a reel being heated and changing.

It is respectfully submitted that the rejection is improper because the applied art fails to teach each and every element of claims 1 and 2, as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art fails to teach that the symbol illumination device comprises a rear illumination lamp configured to illuminate the symbols from behind the symbols and the image display assistance device

reflects light emitted from the rear illumination lamp. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 2 are allowable over the applied art.

It is respectfully submitted that the rejection is improper because the applied art fails to teach each and every element of claims 9 and 10, as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art fails to teach a rear illumination lamp that is disposed behind the symbols and is operative to illuminate the symbols from therebehind. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 9 and 10 are allowable over the applied art.

Claims 4 and 5 depend from claim 1 and includes all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Claims 11 and 12 depend from claim 10 and includes all of the features of claim 10. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 10 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fujii in view of Mizukai et al. (JP 2001-161950). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

By this Amendment, claim 3 is canceled. As a result, the rejection as applied thereto is now moot.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fujii. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

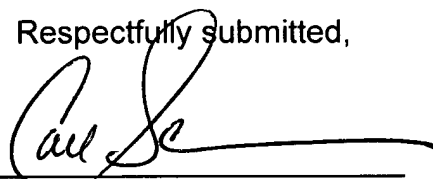
Claim 6 depends from claim 1 and includes all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claim is allowable at least for the reasons claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features it recites.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: October 27, 2010

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Enclosure(s): Amendment Transmittal  
Description of the Invention of Fujii (pages 1/6 through 6/6)

DC410413